

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the Office Action of October 29, 2004 is respectfully requested. In that Office Action claim 1 was rejected in the Office Action under 35 U.S.C § 102(e) based on Palmer '411. In the present amendment claim 1 features stiffeners with flange portions arranged in rows on a fiber reinforced resin skin and with a fiber reinforced material stitched on the skin along flange portions of the stiffeners in a longitudinal direction of said stiffeners. Under this structural arrangement of claim 1, there is facilitated the placement of the stiffeners at predetermined positions without a positioning tool (e.g., see page 6, lines 17-18 and pages 7, 18-19).

Palmer '411 is directed at a stitched reinforced sandwich panel with a high density of stitches extending completely through the outer layers and the core material to "control damage tolerance and to confine the spread of damage from impact to a specific area" (e.g., see the abstract and column 5, lines 24-26). Palmer fails to appreciate or disclose the claim 1 arrangement of the present invention which facilitates stiffener positioning without the need for the positioning tools commonly relied upon in the art.

In the Office Action claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C § 103 based on Palmer '411 and Wilden et al. For the reasons set out above and on the basis that Wilden et al. fail to remedy the aforementioned deficiencies, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 2 also patentably distinguish over the combination asserted against claims 1 and 2.

New claims 7-20 have also been added with claims 9 and 16 being independent claims. A review of independent claims 9 and 16 within this claim group reveals that for reasons similar to those set out above for claim 1, these claims also stand in condition for allowance. No new

matter is considered to have been introduced in the new claims (e.g., see exemplary original Figures 8 and 9).

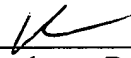
* * *

Applicant respectfully submits that this Amendment and the above remarks obviate all of the outstanding rejections in this case, thereby placing the application in condition for immediate allowance. Allowance of this application is earnestly solicited.

If any fees under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or 1.17 are due in connection with this filing that are not accounted for, please charge the fees to Deposit Account No. 02-4300, Order No. 032405.0951.

Respectfully submitted,
SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP

By:



Dennis C. Rodgers, Reg. No. 32,936
1850 M Street, N.W., Suite 800
Washington, D.C. 20036
Telephone: (202) 263-4300
Facsimile: (202) 263-4329

Dated: February 9, 2005